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# Ontario Teacher Testing Program

AN OVERVIEW



Ontario

Ministry of  
Education



Une publication équivalente est disponible en français sous le titre suivant :  
*Programme ontarien d'évaluation du personnel enseignant : aperçu.*

This publication is available on the Ministry of Education's  
website at <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca>.

Most parents would agree that the quality of their child's teacher can affect whether their child has a difficult year at school or an enriching and rewarding one. Parents want and deserve a publicly funded school system that motivates, inspires and prepares their children for success.

In today's technology-driven, rapidly-changing world, teachers need to keep learning and improving their skills to prepare students to compete and win in a global economy. A top-quality education is not a luxury. It is a way of ensuring that students are well prepared for post-secondary study, working life and civic responsibility when they graduate from high school.

There are many excellent, dedicated teachers in Ontario. However, teacher training and upgrading is not as consistent, effective and rigorous as it needs to be. With the new curriculum for elementary and secondary students, new teachers need to be well-prepared and established teachers need to keep learning and improving their skills.

The Ontario Teacher Testing Program, to be implemented in stages starting this summer, supports both the entry of new teachers into the profession, as well as established teachers. When fully in place, it will provide students, parents and taxpayers with the confidence that all teachers are well-qualified and have up-to-date skills and knowledge.



## Program summary

The Ontario Teacher Testing Program will be developed and implemented in phases over the next few years in collaboration with the Ontario College of Teachers, faculties of education and other education partners.

The government plan includes a number of components, which will have to be passed by the Legislature. The key elements of the program would include:

**1** Effective this summer, all new applicants seeking teacher certification in Ontario, who obtained their training in a language other than English or French, would be required to take and pass an oral and written language proficiency test. This will ensure they can communicate clearly in either English or French before they can teach in Ontario.

**2** Beginning in the fall of 2001, all teachers would be required to be re-certified every five years to ensure they are up-to-date in their knowledge, skills and training. To be re-certified, teachers would have to successfully complete a number of required courses, as well as professional development activities, which would include written tests and other assessments.

**3** Also by the fall of 2001, new province-wide standards would be in place to ensure that principals and school boards evaluate teachers in a consistent manner across the province. Under the new standards, parents would also be given an opportunity to be involved in teacher evaluation.

In addition, a new certification review process would determine if teachers who are not meeting the standards should have their certification removed.

**4** Beginning in 2001-2002, all new teachers would take and pass a qualifying test as a requirement for initial certification or licensing by the Ontario College of Teachers. This will help ensure they know their curriculum subjects and teaching. In addition, the ministry will be designing an induction or intern program where all new teachers would get coaching and support from more experienced colleagues. This would help ensure they get off to a strong start at the beginning of their careers.

## **Focus on accountability, quality assurance**

The demand for quality assurance today exists in every job. Meeting public expectations for quality and excellence is not a challenge faced by teachers alone. Many professions today have a variety of entry requirements, standards for professional development, ongoing assessment and accountability practices.

Teachers in other countries are also being challenged to continually update their skills and knowledge. Many U.S. states, for example, currently require professional development for certificate renewal. Countries such as Australia, England, France, New Zealand and the United States are focussing their assessment programs both on new and established teachers. Across Canada, a number of provinces are also addressing the issue of quality teaching.

The Ontario government has looked at the best of what other professions and jurisdictions are doing, and developed a made-in-Ontario program that sets new standards and practices for teacher quality and teaching excellence.



## Ongoing consultation

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The Ontario Teacher Testing Program responds to the concerns and advice heard in consultations with students, parents, teacher groups, principals and vice-principals, trustees, deans of education, the Ontario College of Teachers, and other education partners.

The Ministry of Education will continue to work with its education partners as it implements the new Teacher Testing Program in stages over the next two years.

*For more information on the Ontario Teacher Testing Program, or on other government initiatives to ensure quality and accountability in the publicly funded education system, visit the Ministry of Education website at [www.edu.gov.on.ca](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca).*



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